

**ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides cDNAs encoding deoxyribonuclease II $\beta$  and isolated, purified deoxyribonuclease II $\beta$  proteins. Antibodies against this protein and antisense agents targeted to a cDNA or corresponding mRNA encoding deoxyribonuclease II $\beta$  are provided. In addition, methods of identifying and using modulators of deoxyribonuclease II $\beta$  activity are described.